

1.0. School Administration

1.A. General

1.A. ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Policy Reference: EL-1.1/EL-1.2

Adopted by Committee: February 10, 2026

Overview

Lakeshore School Division is committed to creating and maintaining an accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory workplace and learning environment for all members of the Lakeshore community. An inclusive environment values diversity and difference, and is based on mutual respect, dignity for all, independence, integration, and equal opportunity to work and learn at Lakeshore.

Lakeshore strives for excellence in serving all students and staff, including persons disabled by barriers. Whether a person's disability is apparent or not, all individuals shall be treated with courtesy and have his or her need for accommodation respected.

Purpose:

The purpose of this regulation and procedure is to:

- Establish Lakeshore's commitment to fostering an accessible and inclusive learning and working environment.
- To ensure that Lakeshore meets all legal obligations and complies with The Manitoba Human Rights Code and The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and all accessibility standards.
- To outline and define Lakeshore's commitment to providing a barrier-free environment for all customers to the greatest extent possible.
- To provide adequate information and awareness to foster a supportive and inclusive teaching, learning and working environment.

Lakeshore shall provide reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of its students and staff with disabilities in a timely and proactive manner providing the accommodation does not:

- Create undue hardship;
- Alter the essential requirements of a program or course;
- Threaten the integrity of contracts of employment by significantly altering essential job requirements or responsibilities;
- Position Lakeshore in violation of any legislative requirement.

Lakeshore will ensure that a fee relating to accommodating a person who is disabled by a barrier is imposed only if Lakeshore cannot reasonably accommodate the person and/or if it results in an undue hardship to Lakeshore.

Any policies of Lakeshore that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for persons disabled by barriers will be

modified or removed.

Lakeshore will establish, implement, and document a multi-year accessibility plan outlining its strategy to prevent and remove barriers at Lakeshore. This document will be updated every two years.

This regulation and procedure applies to:

- All Lakeshore employees including full-time, part-time, casual, and contract;
- All Lakeshore students including full-time and part-time;
- All Lakeshore Board of Trustee members;
- Volunteers and visitors to Lakeshore; and
- All other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of Lakeshore.
- Customer Service Standards

Lakeshore makes every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies and practices are consistent with the principles of mutual respect, dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality of service;
- Using alternative methods when possible to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to the same goods or services, in the same place, and in a similar manner;
- Taking into account individual needs when providing good and services;
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the individual's disability; and
- Maintain Barrier-Free Access

Lakeshore has undertaken a review to identify barriers in an effort to provide an environment that is accessible. Lakeshore's Accessibility Plan outlines future efforts and strategies that Lakeshore is committed to including expected outcomes.

Lakeshore maintains its accessibility features so that they are available for intended use. Accessibility features include, but are not limited to automatic doors, elevators and lifts.

Notice of Temporary Disruption of Services

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of services, Lakeshore will provide notice about the disruption, the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. Notices may be displayed on Lakeshore premises or the website or by other means that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Lakeshore may not be able to provide advance notice during an emergency disruption.

Communications

Lakeshore is committed to communication with persons disabled by barriers in a timely manner that takes into account the person's disability and makes reasonable efforts to have the person with the disability understand both the content and intent of its communications. All Lakeshore employees, students, and Board members are expected to be mindful of the way in which they communicate and use respectful terms. Lakeshore will make the availability of accessible formats and communication supports publicly known. Lakeshore will take into account the person's accessibility needs when customizing individual requests.

Lakeshore will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible format and communication supports for persons disabled by barriers upon request unless the product is deemed unconvertible. In this case, the person shall be provided with an explanation as to why the information or communication was unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Lakeshore is proactively removing barriers to ensure information and communication at Lakeshore is accessible to all stakeholders.

Assistive Devices

Lakeshore is committed to serving persons disabled by barriers who use assistive devices. Persons disabled by barriers may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided at Lakeshore. Lakeshore may, in some circumstances, have available assistive devices that the individual can use while on Lakeshore premises.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure access to the service required at Lakeshore. For example, an oxygen tank cannot be near an open flame. In such a case, the accommodation may involve ensuring the individual is in a location that would be considered safe for both the person and Lakeshore.

Support Persons

Lakeshore allows persons disabled by barriers to enter the premises with their support person and have access to the support person at all times while onsite.

Lakeshore may require a person disabled by barriers to be accompanied by a support person when on Lakeshore premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the security, health or safety of the person disabled by barriers.

Given the nature of the information that may be discussed in the presence of a support person, Lakeshore may require that the person disabled by barriers give his or her consent to Lakeshore to discuss confidential information in the presence of the support person. If the person disabled by barriers has concerns about discussing confidential information in the presence of the support person, he or she may ask the support person to leave during any discussion.

Service Animals

Persons disabled by barriers may bring their service animal on Lakeshore premises and buildings.

If it is not clear that the animal is a service animal, Lakeshore staff may ask the following questions in a respectful and understanding manner to clarify the service animal's purpose:

- **Is the service animal assisting the person with a disability?**
- **What assistance has the service animal been trained to provide related to the disability?**

The person disabled by the barriers is responsible for the care and control of the service animal at all times. Lakeshore staff are permitted to ask the individual if the animal is a pet or service animal. No one should interfere with the service animal while the animal is working without seeking permissions of the animal's owner.

A service animal may be excluded when any one of the following conditions exists:

- **The service animal is disruptive and the animal's owner is not able to effectively control it;**
- **The service animal's presence, behaviour, or actions pose an unreasonable or direct threat to property or the health or safety of others; and**
- **When another law specifically states that the animal must be excluded.**

Feedback

Lakeshore welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible service to all persons. Individuals may reach the Lakeshore Accessibility Coordinator by reaching out to the Director of Human Resources. Lakeshore will reply to all enquiries within three business days. Receiving feedback will help Lakeshore identify barriers and respond to concerns. Privacy will be respected, and all feedback will be reviewed for possible action that can be taken to improve Lakeshore services.

Lakeshore will ensure that our feedback process is accessible to persons disabled by barriers by providing accessible format and communication supports, on request. Lakeshore documents the actions it takes in response to feedback received and ensures that documentation is available upon request in a manner suitable for persons disabled by barriers.

Training

Lakeshore is committed to providing mandatory accessible customer training to:

- **All current and new employees;**
- **All Board members;**
- **All students;**
- **All volunteers and contractors providing services or facilities to customers on behalf of Lakeshore; and**
- **All others involved in developing and/or approving Lakeshore policies, regulations and procedures that deal with the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties.**

Lakeshore provides training to all staff and volunteers as soon as reasonably possible and on an ongoing basis and after any updates are made to the organization's accessible customer service policies.

Lakeshore training provided to staff includes instruction on what to do if a person disabled by a particular barrier is having difficulty accessing goods or services.

Training is provided on an on-going basis, as related policies, practices, and procedures are updated.

Students are provided information on how to access resources and help for accessibility supports, and are provided copies of accessibility policies as part of their initial orientation session with Lakeshore.

Accessible customer service training includes:

- Review the key requirements of the Human Rights Code (Manitoba),
- The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and the Customer Service Standard Regulation, and other standards as they become law.
- An overview of Lakeshore's policy on Accessibility.
- Instruction on the meaning of accommodation and the importance of an inclusive workplace and learning environment.
- An overview of how to interact and communicate with persons disabled by barriers.
- Demonstration on how to use any equipment or assistive devices available at Lakeshore to assist persons disabled by barriers.
- Instruction on how to interact with persons disabled by barriers who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person.

Public Events

Lakeshore will take reasonable measures when public events are held to ensure that:

- Notice of the event will be provided in a way that is accessible.
- Notice will be given stating that persons disabled by barriers can request reasonable accommodations.
- The public event will be held in a facility that is accessible to the greatest extent possible. Lakeshore shall evaluate the public space prior to engaging and will attempt to secure a location that has accessible parking, entrance ways, doors, and washrooms.
- Upon request, physical and communication needs will be provided to the greatest extent possible.

Documentation

Lakeshore will document all policies, practices and procedures related to accessible customer service and will make reasonable efforts to provide notice that these documents

are available upon request.

Lakeshore has an Accessibility webpage which includes Lakeshore's Accessibility Plan and all accessibility policies.

Lakeshore provides requested policy documentation related to accessible customer service within a reasonable time frame and at no cost to the individual.

Confidentiality

Lakeshore is committed to protecting the privacy of employees, students, Board members, and volunteers. At the same time, Lakeshore requires sufficient information to reasonably evaluate and respond to a request for accommodation. Employees, students, Board members and volunteers are encouraged to provide information concerning their needs and accommodations.

All personal information disclosed to Lakeshore shall be governed by privacy legislation and Lakeshore's Privacy and Access to Information Policy.

Administration

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by Board of Trustees every five years. This policy shall remain in effect until amended or revoked regardless of the five-year review.

References/Legislation

The Manitoba Human Rights Code

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act

Customer Service Standard Regulation

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Regulations

The Personal Health Information Act and Regulations

Definitions

Accommodation: This is the process of removing unreasonable burdens or barriers based on a physical and/or mental health disability that limits individual's access to opportunities and benefits available. This includes modifying duties. Examples may include adjusting duties and tasks, hours of work, rules, standards, policies, and environments to ensure that it does not negatively impact an individual based on their disability. Accommodations may be temporary or permanent in nature.

Assistive Device: Is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Examples of personal assistive devices may include a wheelchair, walker, hearing technology, or a personal oxygen tank.

Barrier: For a person who has a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory disability, a barrier is anything that interacts with that disability in a way that may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis.

Reasonable Accommodation: An accommodation is reasonable when there is an adequate process used to decide on the type, degree and possibility of accommodation, and the effort and actions taken by the responsible party are sufficient.

Service Animal: A service animal as defined in the Manitoba Human Rights Code is an animal that has been trained to provide assistance to a person disabled by barriers that relates to that person's disability.

Undue Hardship: Undue hardship is defined as more than minimal hardship and must be based on actual evidence of hardship and not merely assumptions or prejudices. Various factors are considered when assessing undue hardship including financial implications, health and safety risks, legitimate operational requirements, disruption to a collective agreement, and the potential of the accommodation to negatively impact workplace morale. In addition, the Manitoba Human Rights Commission considers the nature, size and scope of a business or organization directly to what is reasonable accommodation in the circumstances